***MEMORANDUM***

TO: Instructor and Teaching Assistants of CSCE 315

FROM: Akash Gajendra

DATE: 17th October, 2021

SUBJECT: Project 2 Phase 4 Update

I'm writing to inform you that our team has reached a stopping point along our software development process for Project 2 which is comprised of a movie recommendation system and this will serve as a notification describing our team’s process in the overall process and more specifically some reflections from my experience of working within the process.

**Project Development Process**

In the following paragraph, I will be summarizing the numerous stages of our project from design to building our application out. The project was split into 4 phases which consisted of – Design Documentation, Database Production, GUI Creation and Querying Movie Recommendations. I was impressed by how open and communicable our team was at almost every stage of project development. I can safely say that every member had a role to play in our delivery of this project, I will be elaborating on the contributions in each phase below: -

1. Phase 1: After having a host of productive meetings, we were able to a database design document for the data and each of us conducted their delegated duties to ensure completion of the document.
2. Phase 2:
   * Akash – Modified ERD diagram and conducted data-preprocessing for some data files, Assisted with population script, initial design of GUI wireframes
   * Josh – Database population
   * Abby – Data pre-processing and working on parts of the GUI design
   * Santoshni – GUI design
   * Isaac – GUI design, Demo SQL queries to interact with the database
3. Phase 3:
   * Akash, Isaac – GUI for Welcome Page, Login Page and Inter-screen Navigation
   * Abby, Josh – GUI for the Analyst page and aggregating the all-user trends for the frame
   * Santoshni – GUI for the Viewer page and recreating the movie recommendations layout that we had in our initial wireframes
4. Phase 4:
   * Akash – Indirect Director, Viewers Beware
   * Isaac – Viewer’s choice
   * Josh – Rotten tomato
   * Abby – Hollywood pairs
   * Santoshni – Cult Classics

It was a new experience working within the waterfall methodology as I have always worked on projects in a more agile experience. After undergoing this process, I can see why industry prefers a more Agile environment as opposed to Waterfall which is documentation heavy right of the bat. In an ideal environment having a structured development process would be good but often curve balls are thrown our way and requirements change thus making the pre-planning redundant. However, it was a great experience putting on the hat of a designer and do some technical writing about the kinds of design choices we chose to implement in our database design phase. I’m grateful for this project as it introduced me to the realm of technical writing that we would have to engage with as software engineers.

**Personal Experience**

This project has solidified my desire to go into data analytics/engineering as a career path. I gained a ton of personal growth in my understanding of database systems and now possess a working knowledge of writing complex queries with SQL. Moreover, I gained a sort of design thinking approach over the course our work with implementing the GUI. I would say the “learn as you go” has been solidified through this project as I had to learn SQL and Java Swing on my own using merely online resources.

In my opinion, working within a team has made this experience more exciting and productive. I’d say our team was successful in collaborating effectively and making sure everyone’s voice was heard. It was within that open communication that lies the biggest success of our team. In terms of challenges, it was difficult to schedule meetings as each of us had varying schedules which got in the way at times.

Recently, I embarked on a bunch of individual projects but moving forward I will look to working with a group of motivated individuals like my fellow teammates. This collaborative mindset coupled with taking on learning deficits is in my opinion at the heart of being a good software/data engineer.

**Peer Evaluation**

I do believe the anonymous peer evaluations were a good method to get the message across for team members who were shy/dislike negative confrontation. It was part of the process of holding yourself and others on the team accountable.

I didn’t find it difficult as much as I found it intimidating as at the end of the phase, I was needlessly nervous about how others felt about my contribution to the team. It becomes difficult to quantify one’s contribution when we collaborate on task together as a team. For example, for the database design document etc.

In my experience, I would say our team had an open dialogue of communication in terms of expectations and was more than willing to help each other out. I suppose we could have had a review session where we could have gone over the peer reviews in details. I do see peer evaluation as a net positive and will be incorporating it moving forward.

**Individual Multipliers**

Akash Gajendra – 1.0

Joshua Johnson – 1.0

Rong Xu – 1.0

Isaac Yeang – 1.0

Santoshni Birlangi – 1.0